

Remarks

Reconsideration of the election of species requirement and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1 through 38 are pending, with Claims 1, 4, 7, 12, 19, 21, 26, 31, and 37 being independent.

The Official Action set forth an election of species requirement as follows: First Species I (Figs. 1a and 1b); Second Species (Fig. 3); and Third Species (Figs. 4a and 4b). The election of species requirement is respectfully traversed for the reasons given below.

In response to the election of species requirements, as noted above, Applicant elects the First Species (Figs. 1a and 1b), with traverse, and respectfully submits that at least Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10-13, 15-22, 24-27, 29-32, and 34-36 are readable upon the elected species.

In addition, Applicant notes that Claims 1, 4, 7, 10-12, 15, 17-19, 21, 24, 26, 29-31, and 34-36 are generic to the First Species (Figures 1a and 1b) and the Second Species (Figure 3). Therefore, if any of generic Claims 1, 4, 7, 10-12, 15, 17-19, 21, 24, 26, 29-31, and 34-36 is allowed, Applicant respectfully requests that the claims reading on both the first and second species — Claims 1-36 — be examined, since upon the allowance of a generic claim, Applicant is entitled to consideration of claims to additional species.

Further, as also noted above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the election of species requirement. Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims could be searched by one Examiner without undue effort. Applicant also

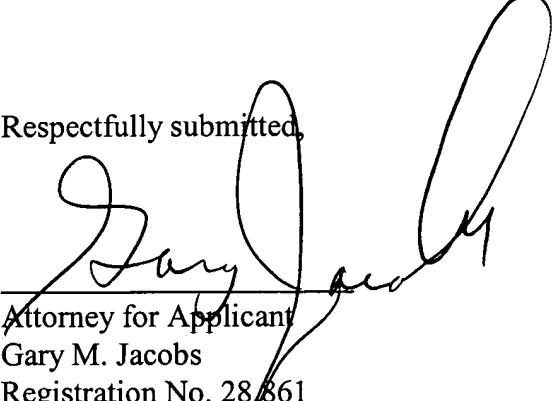
respectfully believes that it is not mandatory to make an election of species requirements in every possible situation and that if one Examiner acts on all of the claims of the present application, overall examining time will be less than if multiple Examiners are involved.

Applicant also earnestly believes that the examination of all of the claims by one Examiner in the present application will best ensure uniform prosecution quality. Therefore, in the interest of prosecution economy of time and quality for both the Office and Applicant, Applicant respectfully submits that withdrawal of the election of species requirements in this application is appropriate.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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